



FAST FACTS

A message for health care providers



Family Violence and the Family Justice Center

What is Family Violence?

- Family violence is the intentional intimidation, abuse or neglect of children, adults or elders by a family member, intimate partner or caretaker in order to gain power and control over the victim.
- Forms of abuse include physical and sexual assault, emotional or psychological mistreatment, threats and intimidation, economic abuse and violation of individual rights.
- Victims of family violence are primarily children, female spouses/intimate partners, and older adults.

Role of health care providers and things you can do in your practice:

- **The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends** that all clinicians examining children and adults should be alert to physical and behavioral signs and symptoms associated with abuse or neglect. Patients in whom abuse is suspected should receive proper incident and physical findings documentation (eg, photographs, body maps); treatment of physical injuries; arrangements for mental health counseling; and contact information for local crisis centers, shelters, and protective service agencies.
- Include a domestic violence screening question in routine questionnaires.
- When a patient is identified or strongly suspected, engage in a more intensive screening process.
- Patients should always be screened confidentially and alone to protect against disclosure to any accompanying partners and children who may repeat information to the patient's partner. Strategies should be developed that ensure confidentiality in cases in which a provider/facility cares for both the abuser and victim.

Family Justice Center (FJC) of Erie County

The FJC provides one-stop, wrap-around services for victims of domestic violence and their children.

- Services are free & confidential and no appointment is necessary. The Center is open to all victims and survivors of domestic or intimate partner violence in Erie County, regardless of gender, race, age, culture, marital status, sexual orientation, immigration status, or disability.
- Services include advocacy, civil legal assistance, safety planning, counseling, shelter referrals, medical examinations, and access to criminal and civil courts.
- Offices are located in Buffalo and Orchard Park.

Resources

- Family Justice Center (FJC) of Erie County www.fjcsafe.org/ or (716) 558-SAFE (7233)
- Erie County Coalition Against Family Violence www.eccafv.org/ (716) 884-6000
- CDC Violence Prevention www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/
- AMA Violence Prevention www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/public-health/promoting-healthy-lifestyles/violence-prevention.page